THE COURT: Are we ready to proceed, Mr. Levitt?

THE DEFENDANT: Good morning.

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                               PROCEEDINGS
 1
               MR. LEVITT: Yes, your Honor.
 2
               THE COURT: So, Mr. Martin, are you ready to
 3
     proceed?
 4
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.
 5
               THE COURT: Have you had enough time, it's a silly
     question under the circumstances I grant you, but have you had
 6
 7
     enough time to consider your decision to offer these pleas of
 8
     quilty?
 9
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
10
               THE COURT: And to confer with Mr. Levitt?
11
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
12
               THE COURT: Are you satisfied with his
13
     representation?
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes, absolutely.
14
15
               THE COURT: Swear the defendant please.
16
               THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Mr. Martin, I'm going to ask
17
     you to remain seated and raise your right hand.
18
               (The defendant was sworn/affirmed.)
19
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
20
               THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Thank you.
21
               THE COURT: All right, sir. As I'm sure Mr. Levitt
22
     has told you, I have to ask you a number of questions.
23
     there's anything I say that isn't entirely clear to you, don't
24
     hesitate to say so. I will do my best to clarify any
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statement.

Case 1:19-cr-00221-RJD-SJR Document 175 Filed 11/22/21 Page 4 of 24 PageID #: PROCEEDINGS 1 If you wish at any time during the proceeding to 2 speak with Mr. Levitt, just make that request and I will see 3 to it that you have as much time as you need to speak privately with Mr. Levitt. 4 5 Do you understand? THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 6 7 THE COURT: Finally, you should understand that 8 you're now under oath, that means your answers to my questions must be truthful. If they were not in any material way, you 9 10 could subject yourself to further criminal charges for the 11 offense of perjury, which is lying while under oath. 12 Do you understand that? 13 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 14 THE COURT: Let's begin by asking you to state your 15 full name. 16 THE DEFENDANT: John Martin. 17 THE COURT: How old are you, Mr. Martin? 18 THE DEFENDANT: Forty-nine. 19 THE COURT: What schooling or formal education have

20 you had?

21 THE DEFENDANT: I went back to school in 2018 and

22 got my high school diploma.

23 THE COURT: Okay. English is your first language I

24 assume.

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

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                               PROCEEDINGS
 1
               THE COURT: Are you currently or have you recently
 2
     been under the care of any physician, psychiatrist, any
 3
     medical professional?
 4
               THE DEFENDANT: Just for COVID.
 5
               THE COURT: You've been treated?
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
 6
 7
               THE COURT: W are you feeling?
 8
               THE DEFENDANT:
                               Feeling a little better.
 9
               THE COURT: I'm sorry?
10
               THE DEFENDANT: Feeling a little better.
11
               THE COURT: Are you able to concentrate on what I
12
     say to you?
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
13
14
               THE COURT: Have you had any medication in the past
15
     24 hours?
16
               THE DEFENDANT: Just breathing machine.
17
               THE COURT: Have you ever had a problem with drugs
18
     or alcohol?
19
               THE DEFENDANT: Yes.
20
               THE COURT: Could you explain briefly.
21
               THE DEFENDANT: I had used cocaine when I was home.
22
               THE COURT:
                           Okay.
23
               THE DEFENDANT: And alcohol.
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THE COURT: I'm sorry?

THE DEFENDANT: And alcohol.

24

Do you understand that?

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PROCEEDINGS

1 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 2 THE COURT: And if you persist in your plea of not 3 quilty you'd be entitled to a speedy and a public trial by jury with the assistance of counsel on the charges in the 4 5 superseding indictment. 6 Do you understand that? 7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 8 THE COURT: At trial you'd be presumed innocent of all the charges. The government would have to attempt to 9 10 overcome this presumption of innocence and prove you guilty by competent evidence and beyond a reasonable doubt. You, sir, 11 12 would not be required to do a thing. You could sit back and 13 do nothing, say nothing. Simply put the government to the 14 burden of trying to convince the jury of your guilt. 15 Do you understand? 16 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 17 THE COURT: That means, as a practical matter, sir, 18 that if the government were to fail in any way, technical or 19 otherwise, the jury would be required under my instructions to 20 find you not guilty even if you committed these offenses. 21 Do you follow? 22 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 23 THE COURT: Now in the course of a trial the 24 government would be obligated of course to bring its witnesses

here to the courtroom, each would be required to testify under

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PROCEEDINGS 1 oath, in your presence, the presence of counsel. You would 2 have the right therefore to confront each of these witnesses 3 face to face here in the courtroom. Do you understand that? 4 5 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: You'd have the right to, through 6 7 counsel, to cross examine each of the government's witnesses and you'd have the right, when appropriate, to object to 8 evidence offered by the government. You'd have the right to 9 10 offer evidence in your own defense and in that regard you 11 could compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of 12 evidence through the use of a court order or subpoena. 13 Do you understand that? 14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: At trial, you would have the right to 15 16 testify in your own defense, but you'd be under no obligation 17 to do so. As I said before, the government is -- the burden 18 is on the government to prove your guilt, you have no burden 19 whatsoever. 20 Do you understand that? 21 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 22 THE COURT: If you chose to avail yourself of that 23 right and not testify and if counsel requested of me, as he

right and not testify and if counsel requested of me, as he likely would, I would instruct the jury in the strongest possible terms that they could not in any way hold your

24

Case 1:19-cr-00221-RJD-SJR Document 175 Filed 11/22/21 Page 9 of 24 PageID #: PROCEEDINGS 1 decision against you. 2 Do you understand that, Mr. Martin? 3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: And finally, the decision to testify or 4 5 not is yours to make. Not counsel's, right. It's yours to Obviously, you make that decision in consultation with 6 make. 7 your attorney, but ultimately it is your decision to make. 8 Do you understand that? 9 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 10 THE COURT: And, finally, no one else can make you 11 testify, not your lawyer, not the government's lawyer, not the 12 The decision is entirely your own. 13 Do you understand that? 14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: All right. So if you plead quilty, 15 16 Mr. Martin, you give up all these rights for all time. 17 Do you understand? 18 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 19 THE COURT: There will be no trial, with the 20

THE COURT: There will be no trial, with the possible exception of sentence which I'll explain in a few minutes, there is no right to an appeal. I will simply enter a judgment of guilty based upon your plea of guilty.

Do you understand that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

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THE COURT: And, finally, before I can accept your

PROCEEDINGS

1 pleas I'm required, by rule, to satisfy myself that you are in 2 fact guilty of the charges in counts -- I believe we're 3 talking about Counts Two and three? MR. LEVITT: One, Two and Three, your Honor. 4 5 THE COURT: One, Two, Three? MR. LEVITT: Yes. 6 7 THE COURT: To do that I'm going ask you a few 8 questions in just a moment or two. In responding to my questions, obviously you give up your right to remain silent. 9 10 You'll give up your constitutional right not to incriminate 11 yourself and you'll be called upon here in open court to 12 acknowledge your guilt. 13 Do you understand? 14 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 15 THE COURT: Are you willing then to give up your 16 right to a trial and these other rights I have just explained? 17 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 18 THE COURT: I understand there is no agreement 19 between the parties, but I do have a penalty sheet, we'll get 20 to that in just a few minutes. 21 All right. The charges One, Two and Three. Okay, 22 the charges read as follows: 23 Count One, in or about and between March 2019 and 24 May 2019, within the Eastern District of New York and

elsewhere, the defendant, John Martin, also known as Lil John

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### PROCEEDINGS

and LJ and other defendants named, together with others, did knowingly and intentionally conspire to obstruct, delay and affect commerce in the movement of articles and commodities in commerce by robbery, to wit: The robbery of commercial proceeds and narcotics trafficking proceeds from individuals in Queens County, New York; Richmond County, New York; Suffolk County, New York; and New Jersey, end quote.

Count Two reads:

On or about May 4, 2019, within the Eastern District of New York, the defendants, John Martin and other defendants named, together with others, did knowingly and intentionally commit and threaten physical violence to one or more persons whose identities are known to the grand jury, inside a residence in Queens, New York in furtherance of a plan and purpose to obstruct, delay and affect commerce and the movement of articles and commodities in commerce by robbery, to wit: A plan and purpose to obtain commercial proceeds and narcotics trafficking proceeds from persons inside the residence by reference.

And, finally, Count Three reads:

On or about May 4, 2019 within the Eastern District of New York, the defendants, John Martin and other defendants named, together with others, did knowingly and intentionally use and carry one or more firearms during and in relation to a crime of violence, to wit: The crime charged in Count Two,

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### PROCEEDINGS

1 and did knowingly and intentionally possess such firearms in furtherance of said crime of violence one or more which 2 3 firearms were brandished. Have you reviewed these charges, Mr. Martin? 4 5 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: Are you competent that you understand 6 7 what you're charged with? 8 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. THE COURT: In Count One, sir, you're charged with 9 10 the crime of conspiracy. What is your understanding, 11 Mr. Martin, of the crime of conspiracy, what is a conspiracy? 12 THE DEFENDANT: To conspire with one or more person. 13 THE COURT: Okay. Well, you defined it by using the 14 term, but I think you have the gist of it. The crime charged 15 in Count One is an illegal agreement, okay. It's the 16 agreement itself that is the focus of the crime, not anything 17 that comes after. If you and I agree to sell cocaine on the 18 street and we mean it, we've committed the crime of conspiracy 19 to distribute cocaine regardless of whether we sell a gram. 20 You follow? 21 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 22 THE COURT: Just make sure we all understand this. 23 All right. 24 Now let me turn my attention to the all important

subject of sentencing. This discussion, Mr. Martin, really

### PROCEEDINGS

comes in three parts. The first part has to do with the statutory penalties for these offenses, that is, the penalties that Congress has written into the statute. Then I'll go on to discuss briefly the sentencing guidelines and, finally, explain to you what ultimately the law requires of me. All right.

For Counts One and Two -- bear with me just a second. For Counts One and Two there is a maximum term of 20 years imprisonment, there is no mandatory minimum. You are subject to a term of supervised release of three years. Supervised release is a period of supervision that begins the moment you walk out of federal prison, okay. If you were to violate the terms or conditions of your supervised release, then under the terms of my sentence in this case you could be returned to prison for up to two years without any credit being given to you for the time you spent at liberty under supervision.

Do you follow that?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: Okay. The statute also provides for a fine and in this instance it's the greater of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain. Restitution is mandatory, as indicated, in the full amount of each victims' losses.

I will impose not only for Count One but each of the counts a special assessment of \$100, as I'm required to do.

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### PROCEEDINGS

So the special assessments would total \$300 and you will face criminal forfeiture of the proceeds of any crime or any property derived from those proceeds in a proceeding that will be addressed at the time of sentence or shortly thereafter.

Now Count Three is different, Mr. Martin, as I'm sure you know. The maximum term here is life imprisonment, this is by statute, the maximum term. The minimum term is seven years. What I'm required to do is add that seven years to any sentence I impose on Counts One and Two. I don't have any discretion. I have to just pile it on.

Do you understand what I'm saying?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: And by the way, the sentences, something of a technical point, the sentences for Counts One and Two could run consecutively, all right. I'm not saying they will, but the law would permit me to impose consecutive sentences.

Then whatever sentence or sentences I impose on Counts One and Two I would then be required to add a sentence of seven years.

Here the maximum term of supervised release is five years and if you were to violate the supervised release in this provision, you'd be subject to being returned for a full five years without any credit being given to you for the time you spent at liberty.

Again, the same fine, 250,000 or twice the gross gain, and the special assessment as I have mentioned before.

### PROCEEDINGS

We are, in fact, conducting two proceedings simultaneously, I appreciate that. There is outstanding a violation of supervised release that focuses on these very same charges, just so the record is clear.

With respect to the violation, the maximum term of is five years, there is no mandatory minimum. The maximum

supervised release term is life to follow any term of imprisonment less any term of imprisonment that was imposed upon revocation of supervised release. That's a bit of a

Have you discussed these charges and the penalties with counsel?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

mouthful but that's what it is.

THE COURT: Do you have any questions you'd like to put to me? Take your time. Just move away from the microphone.

(Counsel and defendant confer.)

MR. LEVITT: Thank you, your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. Counsel has answered your questions to your satisfaction, Mr. Martin?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: All right. Continuing along here.

One point I should make is that the sentence for the violation of supervised release could run consecutively. I can virtually assure you it will not, okay?

PROCEEDINGS

1 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

2 THE COURT: The next part is the guidelines. Have

3 you seen this penalty sheet, Mr. Martin?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: You've had chance to review it with

6 counsel?

7 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: The government has laid out their view, their calculation, if you will, of what we call the guideline sentencing, the advisory range under the sentencing guidelines and this addresses the question of where within this rather wide statutory range, in your case zero to life, you should be sentenced, okay? And the guidelines take into consideration a lot of information that would be obvious, the crimes themselves of course, your personal history, criminal history, et cetera, et cetera.

This is the government's version here. It's not my version, okay, I just want you to understand that. I may ultimately agree with this, I may disagree with it in whole or in part, okay, and indeed Mr. Levitt will have something to say on the subject, but just so you know, today when you offer these pleas of guilty, it is what the government is thinking in terms the applicable guidelines range, okay. It's laid out on pages three, four to five of your agreement.

The government concludes that given your criminal

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### PROCEEDINGS

history of -- assuming a criminal history of III, an effective quidelines range, meaning the quidelines range plus the seven years I have to add -- let me just -- let me get this straight -- is 256 to 298 months. That's the government's calculation. It may be right, it may be wrong. I can't tell you today, sir, whether I agree with it or not. I won't be in a position to tell you until after I have received the presentence report prepared by the Probation Department that will tell the story of the case and your involvement in it. It will have a personal history, it will explain any criminal history. You'll see that document, Mr. Martin, along with counsel before I do as will the government. Mr. Levitt will be given an opportunity to voice objections, comment on the report to the Probation Department, it will eventually come to me. To the extent that there are any material facts that are in dispute, which could happen, we'll find a way to resolve those factual disputes either informally, through presentations by counsel, or if necessary we could have a hearing and take live testimony to resolve any factual disputes. Once the facts are in place, it becomes my

Once the facts are in place, it becomes my obligation to apply the guidelines as I understand them, all right, and establish for the Court's purpose a sentencing range, an advisory sentencing range. So as the term suggests, Mr. Martin, I'm not bound by this guidelines calculation, but

PROCEEDINGS

1 I am bound to consider it as part of the sentencing judgment. 2 All right. 3 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 4 THE COURT: Now we get to stage three. What the law 5 requires ultimately is that I consider the advisory -- that I calculate and consider the advisory guideline range, other 6 7 factors that are laid out in the statute that are quite 8 predictable about the nature of the crime, the offender, et 9 cetera, and any other information that Mr. Levitt or the 10 government believes is pertinent to the sentencing judgment, 11 anything they bring to my attention. I take all of that in 12 and what the law requires of me is a reasonable sentence. 13 If at the time you think I've imposed an 14 unreasonable sentence, you may appeal that sentence to a 15 higher court and the fees and expenses associated with that 16 application, including counsel fees, will be paid by the 17 Court. 18 Do you understand? 19 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 20 THE COURT: Counsel, have I left anything out? MR. LEVITT: No, your Honor. 21 22 MR. GIBALDI: No, your Honor. 23 THE COURT: Are you ready to plead, Mr. Martin? 24 THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: What is your plea then to Count One of

a robbery or robberies, that you were involved in a particular robbery on the 4th of May 2019, and that during that robbery a

firearm was brandished. Tell me what you did.

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THE DEFENDANT: As to Count One of the third

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### PROCEEDINGS

superseding indictment, between March 2019 and May 2019, I agreed with one or more person to rob people of money inside a residence in Queens, New York. I've been told that the government has evidence that the money targeting was in fact commercial proceeds and/or narcotic trafficking proceeds and I do not dispute this.

THE COURT: You said you do not dispute this?

MR. LEVITT: Yes, your Honor.

THE COURT: Okay. Fair enough.

THE DEFENDANT: As to Count Two of the third superseding indictment, on or about May 4th, 2019 I participated in a robbery, charges in Count One knowing that one or more persons would be threatened with violence if necessary to commit the charge robbery and I understand that the fact such threats were made.

As to Count Three of the third superseding indictment, on or about May 4th during the robbery conspiracy I admit to Count One, one or more firearms was brandished and others involved in the robbery and this was reasonable foreseeable.

THE COURT: When you say reasonably foreseeable, none of this came as a surprise to you. You were going to rob what you thought were proceeds of something, some funds, you were going to do that with the use of a weapon, you and your colleagues, I should say.

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### PROCEEDINGS

MR. LEVITT: What was reasonably foreseeable, your Honor, was the use of a weapon.

THE COURT: Is that right?

THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

THE COURT: Anything from the government? Anything else? This happened in Queens, he's allocuted to that.

Anything else?

MR. GIBALDI: Just a few facts to put on the record, your Honor. First of all, I just want to confirm that the government would be prepared to prove with respect to Count Three that the firearm was actually brandished by one of Mr. Martin's co-conspirators.

I also would like to put on the record with respect to Counts One and Two that at trial the government would be prepared to prove that the purpose of the charged conspiracy was to rob narcotics proceeds and narcotics and that the purpose of the Queens robbery charged in Count Two was to rob narcotics proceeds.

THE COURT: All right. Based on the information given to me, I find that the defendant is acting voluntarily and he fully understands his rights, the consequences and possible consequences of his pleas, and that there are factual bases for these pleas of guilty. I, therefore, accept the pleas of guilty to Counts One, Two and Three of the superseding indictment 19-CR-221, S-3.

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1 Mr. Martin, I urge you to cooperate with the 2 Probation Department, consistent of course with the advice of 3 counsel, in their preparation of the presentence report. will have the clerk of the court announce the sentencing date. 4 5 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: December 17th at 12 o'clock. 6 THE COURT: That's an interesting day, December 17. 7 Let's see, what year will it be. December 17th, I don't know 8 if that's a good omen or bad, but December 17th is the day I 9 was sworn in as a lawyer so it sticks with me. All right. 10 Now, pending as well, as you know, as we discussed 11 briefly, are violations of supervised release and these 12 violations one, two and three all relate to the events that 13 you've just acknowledged. The violation itself is a violation 14 of a condition that you not commit another crime. So with 15 respect to each of these crimes simultaneously you have 16 acknowledged a violation of supervised release. 17 Do you understand that? 18 THE DEFENDANT: Yes. 19 THE COURT: I've already related to you what the 20 possible sentencing would be as a result of these violations. 21 Anything else I need to add? 22 MR. LEVITT: Not from our standpoint. 23 MR. GIBALDI: No, your Honor. 24 THE COURT: The defendant has, during this 25 proceeding, acknowledged the violations in the presence and

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#### PROCEEDINGS

with the advice of counsel, and the acknowledgement is accepted by the Court.

Anything further?

MR. GIBALDI: Your Honor, just before we conclude I did want to put on the record the basis for the government's guidelines estimate, because there are additional robberies and attempted robberies that are the basis for that estimate.

A completed armed robbery on April 6 that the defendant participated in; an attempted armed robbery on May 3rd in Staten Island; and an attempted armed robbery on May 5th in Suffolk County as well as the Queens robbery that's the subject of Counts Two and Three.

MR. LEVITT: Judge, just for the record, I don't want my silence to be taken as acquiescence, because it is not, but we'll address these issues at a later date.

THE COURT: Yes, sir, understood.

All right, then we will -- anything further,

Mr. Levitt?

MR. LEVITT: Nothing further, your Honor. Thank you.

THE COURT: All right, thank you, gentlemen.

Mr. Martin, take care of yourself. I know you've been in a rough spot for a long time, I'm not unaware, but we will reconvene in December. Unless there's anything else, we'll call it a day.

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1	THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Judge Dearie, when you leave
2	the bench I'm going to work out a sentence submission briefing
3	schedule with the attorneys.
4	THE COURT: Sure.
5	MR. GIBALDI: Thank you, your Honor.
6	THE COURT: Yes, indeed.
7	(Matter concluded.)
8	* * * *
9	I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.
10	record or proceedings in the above-entitled matter.
11	s/ Georgette K. Betts August 17, 2021
12	GEORGETTE K. BETTS DATE
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